

# REPORT

ON

## NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 21st March 1891.

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## LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.
<b>BENGALI.</b>				
<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
1	"Ahmadí" ... ..	Tangail, Mymensingh	600	
2	"Hitakari" ... ..	Kushtea ...	800	
3	"Kasipore Nivási" ... ..	Kasipore, Burrisal ...	280	
4	"Navamihir" ... ..	Ghatail, Mymensingh	500	
5	"Sahayogi" ... ..	Burrisal ...	342	
6	"Uluberia Darpan" ... ..	Uluberia ...	700	
<i>Weekly.</i>				
7	"Bangavási" ... ..	Calcutta ...	20,000	14th March 1891.
8	"Banganivási" ... ..	Ditto ...	8,000	13th ditto.
9	"Burdwán Sanjivani" ... ..	Burdwan ...	335	10th ditto.
10	"Cháruvartá" ... ..	Sherepore, Mymensingh	500	9th ditto.
11	"Dacca Prakash" ... ..	Dacca ...	2,200	15th ditto.
12	"Education Gazette" ... ..	Hooghly ...	825	13th ditto.
13	"Gramvási" ... ..	Ramkrispore, Howrah	1,000	16th ditto.
14	"Hindu Ranjiká" ... ..	Beauleah, Rajshahye...	212	
15	"Murshidábád Pratinidhi" ... ..	Berhampore ...	.....	
16	"Navayuga" ... ..	Calcutta ...	500	
17	"Pratikar" ... ..	Berhampore ...	609	
18	"Rungpore Dikprakash" ... ..	Kakinia, Rungpore ...	.....	
19	"Sahachar" ... ..	Calcutta ...	500	11th ditto.
20	"Sakti" ... ..	Dacca ...	.....	10th ditto.
21	"Samáj-o-Sáhitya" ... ..	Garibpore, Nuddea ...	1,000	
22	"Samaya" ... ..	Calcutta ...	3,000	13th ditto.
23	"Sanjivani" ... ..	Ditto ...	4,000	14th ditto.
24	"Sansodhini" ... ..	Chittagong ...	.....	
25	"Saráswat Patra" ... ..	Dacca ...	300	14th ditto.
26	"Som Prakash" ... ..	Calcutta ...	600	16th ditto.
27	"Sudhakar" ... ..	Ditto ...	3,100	13th ditto.
28	"Sulabh Samáchar" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....	7th and 14th March 1891.
29	"Surabhi-o-Patáká" ... ..	Ditto ...	700	6th March 1891.
<i>Daily.</i>				
30	"Banga Vidyá Prakashiká" ... ..	Calcutta ...	500	13th, 14th, and 16th to 19th March 1891.
31	"Bengal Exchange Gazette" ... ..	Ditto ...	.....	11th to 13th and 15th to 18th March 1891.
32	"Dainik o Samáchar Chandriká" ... ..	Ditto ...	1,000	15th to 18th March 1891.
33	"Samvád Prabhakar" ... ..	Ditto ...	1,500	13th and 17th to 19th March 1891.
34	"Samvád Purnachandrodaya" ... ..	Ditto ...	300	12th to 14th, and 16th to 19th March 1891.



No.	Names of newspapers.		Place of publication		Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	
ENGLISH AND BENGALI.							
Weekly.							
35	"Dacca Gazette"	...	Dacca	...	.....		
HINDI.							
Monthly.							
36	"Darjeeling Mission ke Másik Samáchár Patrika."		Darjeeling	...	50		
37	"Kshatriya Patriká"	...	Patna	...	250		
Weekly.							
38	"Aryávarta"	...	Calcutta	...	750	14th March 1891.	
39	"Behar Bandhu"	...	Bankipore	...	500	5th and 12th March 1891.	
40	"Bhárat Mitra"	...	Calcutta	...	1,200	12th March 1891.	
41	"Champarun Chandrika"	...	Bettiah	...	350		
42	"Desí Vyápári"	...	Calcutta	...	.....		
43	"Hindi Bangavási"	...	Ditto	...	.....		
44	"Sár Sudhánidhi"	...	Ditto	...	500		
45	"Uchit Baktá"	...	Ditto	...	4,500		
URDU.							
Weekly.							
46	"Al Punch"	...	Bankipore	...	.....	9th	ditto.
47	"Anis"	...	Patna	...	.....		
48	"Calcutta Punch"	...	Calcutta	...	.....		
49	"Gauhur"	...	Ditto	...	196		
50	"Raisul-Akhbari-Moorshidabad"	...	Murshidabad	...	150		
51	"Setare Hind"	...	Arrah	...	.....	5th	ditto.
52	"Urdu Guide and Darussaltanat"	...	Calcutta	...	340	13th	ditto.
URIYA.							
Monthly.							
53	"Asha"	...	Cuttack	...	165		
54	"Pradíp"	...	Ditto	...	.....		
55	"Samyabadi"	...	Ditto	...	.....		
56	"Taraka and Subhavártá"	...	Ditto	...	.....		
Weekly.							
57	"Dipaka"	...	Cuttack	...	.....		
58	"Samvad Váhika"	...	Balasore	...	200		
59	"Uriya and Navasamvád"	...	Ditto	...	420		
60	"Utkal Dípiká"	...	Cuttack	...	420		
PAPERS PUBLISHED IN ASSAM.							
BENGALI.							
Fortnightly.							
61	"Paridarshak"	...	Sylhet	...	480	9th	ditto.
62	"Silchar"	...	Silchar	...	500		
Weekly.							
63	"Srihatta Mihir"	...	Sylhet	...	332	9th	ditto.





## II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

## (a)—Police.

THE *Surabhi-o-Patáká*, of the 6th March, has the following on the subject of the Police Commission:—

SURABHI-O-PATAKA,  
March 6th, 1891.

The Police Commission.

The Commission examined only a few respectable people of Calcutta, and is now engaged in writing its report. It should not have gone through its work so hurriedly. The writer is at a loss to see how the evidence given before it by Calcutta gentlemen will enable it to write its report on the working of the mofussil police. The questions put by the Commission are thus answered:—

*1st Question.*—Whether the Magistrates or the villagers should be entrusted with the duty of appointing panchayets?

*Answer.*—The panchayets should be elected by the villagers subject to the approval of the Magistrate. If the Magistrate disapproves of the election of any particular person, he will give reasons for his disapproval, and then get the name of the person struck off the list of elected persons with the consent of the rest of the elected body. The panchayets should be made independent of the police.

*2nd Question.*—Whether the police or the panchayets should be entrusted with the duty of paying the salaries of chowkidars?

*Answer.*—It is the panchayets and not the police who should be entrusted with that duty. They should also be entrusted with the collection of the chowkidari tax, and it should be the duty of the Magistrate to see whether or not the chowkidars are paid their salaries regularly. The chowkidars should be absolutely under the control of panchayets.

*3rd Question.*—At what rates should the chowkidars be paid?

*Answer.*—The chowkidars should be paid at the rate of 6 to 7 rupees per month.

*4th Question.*—Whether or not the panchayets should be entrusted with the duty of giving information at the thana?

*Answer.*—The panchayets should give information through the chowkidar. And when the chowkidar is ill, they should be empowered to send information through some other person, and the head of the thana should accept information so conveyed.

*5th Question.*—Whether the village chowkidars should be brought under the control of the police or of the Magistrate?

*Answer.*—During an investigation the chowkidars should obey the orders of the police, but at other times they should be under the control of the panchayets.

*6th Question.*—Which classes of officers should be entrusted with the charge of thanas and outposts?

*Answer.*—The sub-inspectors should be entrusted with the charge of thanas. As constables sometimes become head-constables, the latter should not be entrusted with the charge either of a thana or of an outpost.

*7th Question.*—At what rates should constables be paid?

*Answer.*—Constables should be paid at the rate of 10 to 15 rupees per month, and no deduction should be made from the salary either of a constable or of a sub-inspector on account of the cost of uniform.

*8th Question.*—At what rate should sub-inspectors be paid?

*Answer.*—As sub-inspectors have in many cases to keep horses, they should be paid at the rate of 60 to 100 rupees per month. They should also be paid travelling allowance when they go out on investigation.

*9th Question.*—What classes of officers should be entrusted with the duty of conducting investigations?

*Answer.*—This duty should never be entrusted to head constables.

*10th Question.*—What sort of persons should be taken in the police service?

*Answer.*—Head constables should be selected from among those who know how to read and write and who have discharged their duties with credit. Head constables should also, in consideration of their ability, be promoted to the rank of sub-inspectors. Sub-Inspectors should also be appointed by competitive examination. Inspectors should be selected from among sub-inspectors and paid at the rate of 125 to 300 rupees per month.



11th Question.—Why is so large a number of asamis acquitted by the criminal courts?

Answer.—The acquittal is due not to the fault of the Judges and Magistrates, but to the fault of the police, and the way in which it conducts its investigations.

BANGANIVASI,  
March 13th, 1891.

2. The *Banganivási*, of the 13th March, says that the police is often found to commit the very offences for the prevention of which it has been called into existence. It is corrupt and oppressive. It oppresses the poor who cannot satisfy it with bribes, while by bribing it the wealthy are enabled to commit offences with impunity. The oppressive character of the police is principally due to the fact that there are few educated men in the Police Service. Government is convinced of the necessity of reforming the Police Department, and appointed a Commission to suggest the required reforms. It is not known, however, when the work of reform will be taken in hand, or how far the civilian members of the Commission will be able to suggest such reforms as may be desired by the people. The writer draws the attention of Mr. Lambert to the practice of selling liquor after 9 P.M., a practice which prevails widely in Calcutta. The prevalence of the practice is well known to the police officers of the town, whose duty it is to check it, but they affect not to know it, owing probably to arrangements existing between them and the owners of the liquor shops. It behoves Government to attend to this matter.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

BENGAL EXCHANGE  
GAZETTE,  
March 15th, 1891.

3. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 15th March, says that a judicial officer at Alipore, 24-Pergunnahs, is conducting himself very improperly. The officer is always in temper and gets annoyed with the pleaders and barristers in his court off and on. He also treats pleaders and barristers rudely.

GRAMVASI,  
March 16th, 1891.

4. The *Grámvási*, of the 16th March, gives the substance of two petitions supported by affidavits and filed in the High Court by Babu Hema Chandra Ghosh, late zemindar of Bagnon, Chandrapur, in the Uluberia sub-division of the Howrah district, preferring grave charges against the Deputy Magistrate of Uluberia in connection with his decision in a case to which the petitioner was a party.

(d)—Education.

SANJIVANI,  
March 14th, 1891.

5. The *Sanjivani*, of the 14th March, thanks the Calcutta University authorities for the promptitude with which they have communicated the results of the Entrance Examination this year to the schools which sent up candidates. The officers who have thus been able to introduce order where affairs had hitherto been in a state of hopeless disorder are surely deserving of thanks from the public.

SANJIVANI.

6. The same paper does not approve of the transfer of the management of the Burrisal zilla school to the District Board and the Municipality. There are already two colleges in Burrisal, and there was no need of devoting the money of the District Board to high education. A similar arrangement has been made in Howrah, too, although the Ripon Collegiate School in that place is showing very good results. The making over of zillah schools to municipalities is attended with the pernicious effect of creating an improper competition on the part of municipalities. It is said that the Municipal Commissioners of Howrah have put pressure upon the guardians of boys in order to have their boys transferred from the Ripon Collegiate School to their own. Government should take care not to give rise to such baneful competition. The writer apprehends similar competition between the municipal and the private schools in Burrisal too.

SOM PRAKASH,  
March 16th, 1891.

7. The *Som Prakásh*, of the 16th March, objects to the proposed amalgamation of the Hindu and Hare Schools, and remarks as follows:—

When Government established the Hindu School, the people of the country raised Rs. 1,81,000 by subscription and made over the sum to Government as a



contribution towards the school fund. Government then promised to maintain the school even if it should be necessary for it to spend Rs. 1,200 a month on its account. But up to this the Government's loss on account of the school has amounted only to Rs. 500 a month. Why then is the school going to be abolished? The deficit in the finances of the school can be easily made up. If, however, Government does not wish to suffer any loss on its account it should make it over to a committee with the sum of Rs. 1,81,000 originally raised by subscription.

(e)—*Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

8. A correspondent of the *Burdwan Sanjivani*, of the 10th March, is astonished to find in the *Calcutta Gazette* the name of a person who lives almost on charity in the list of the names of Municipal Commissioners nominated by Government for the Culna Municipality. This man has been described in the *Gazette* as a mahajan, or rich man.
- A nominated Commissioner of the Culna Municipality.
9. The *Samay*, of the 13th March, is glad to learn that the Lieutenant-Governor has refused to sanction the proposal of the Commissioners of the Calcutta Municipality to increase the salary of their Chairman.
- The pay of the Chairman of the Calcutta Municipality.
- BURDWAN SANJIVANI,  
March 10th, 1891.
- SAMAY,  
March 13th, 1891.

(f)—*Questions affecting the land.*

10. A correspondent writing from Chittagong in the *Sudhakar*, of the 13th March, says that the amins who have been employed in making surveys in Chittagong are exercising great *zulm* over the people. They are extorting money, grains and food. There was recently a quarrel between these amins and the people for a jarful of molasses which the former attempted to take by force from its owner. The amins being frustrated in their object, have laid a criminal charge before the Magistrate against the people.
- The survey amins in Chittagong.
- The authorities should carefully look into the matter.
11. The *Som Prakash*, of the 16th March, is glad to learn that Sir Charles Elliott has consented to extend the provisions of the Bengal Tenancy Act to Orissa. This act of His Honour is a proof of his independence and thoughtfulness.
- The Bengal Tenancy Act in Orissa.
- SUDHAKAR,  
March 13th, 1891.
- SOM PRAKASH,  
March 16th, 1891.

(g)—*Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.*

12. A correspondent of the *Som Prakash*, of the 16th March, says that respectable passengers are put to very great inconvenience in consequence of there being no rest-house near the Assensole station on the East Indian Railway line. The Railway authorities are asked to construct a few rooms near the station, where respectable passengers may take rest while waiting for the train.
- A rest-house near the Assensole station on the East Indian Railway line.
- SOM PRAKASH,  
March 16th, 1891.

(h)—*General.*

13. The *Setare Hind*, of the 5th March, says that though Government at first held out great hopes to the Census enumerators, it has now sent many of them to prison and has fined others for remissness in the performance of their duty.
- The Census.
14. The *Sulabh Samachar*, of the 7th March, thanks the Government for the rules it has issued on the subject of the soldiers' shooting parties. These rules, if strictly obeyed, will make it impossible for European soldiers to kill natives like beasts when out shooting, and then to escape scot-free at the hands of European Magistrates.
- Rules regulating soldiers' shooting parties.
15. The *Sanjivani*, of the 14th March, says that though there is a surplus of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  crores in this year's Budget, still Government will not reduce the salt duty. The writer entreats the Government on behalf of the poor to reduce that duty.
- The Budget.
- SETARE HIND,  
March 5th, 1891.
- SULABH SAMACHAR,  
March 7th, 1891.
- SANJIVANI,  
March 14th, 1891.



The military expenditure of Government is increasing every year. In 1888-89 it was Rs. 20,30,18,000; in 1889-90 it rose to Rs. 20,67,78,000. So this military expenditure alone is eating into the vitals of exhausted India. If so much as a fourth part of the total annual revenue of the empire is spent in warfare, it will certainly be impossible for Government to improve the internal condition of the country. Government can spend only Rs. 1,31,40,000 on education.

It will also appear that Rs. 16,11,000 was spent on the Church establishment, and that in 1889-90 an embassy to Persia cost India Rs. 1,45,000, and an embassy to China Rs. 2,17,000. If the English can secure any advantages in Persia or China, it is England alone that will enjoy it. India will in no way benefit by such advantages, but she must pay the expenses of the embassies. Is not this injustice to India? Should wealthy England thus extort money from poor India? When will England do justice to this country?

SULABH SAMACHAR,  
March 14th, 1891.

16. The *Sulabh Samachar*, of the 14th March, thanks the Government Babu Bishun Charan Dutta as Postmaster-General of Behar. for having appointed Babu Bishun Charan Dutta to a high post like the Postmaster-Generalship of Behar.

### III.—LEGISLATIVE.

SITARE HIND,  
March 5th, 1891.

17. The *Setare Hind*, of the 5th March, fails to see why Government is so anxious to pass an ominous Bill like the Age of Consent Bill. If the authorities really wish to benefit the people, they should withdraw the Bill, and try to put a stop to the increasing drunkenness among the people. But then increased sale of liquor brings more money into the Government's purse, and the sale of liquor will not, it is certain, be interfered with.

AL PUNCH,  
March 9th, 1891.

18. *Al Punch*, of the 9th March, gives a dialogue in which a wife insists on her husband the necessity of marrying their daughter, a girl of nine years, as it has been the custom of the country from time immemorial to marry daughters at a very early age. The husband, however, tries to make her understand that the Government has by law prohibited such marriages, and tells her that men like Abdul Lutif Khan Bahadur have seen nothing in such a law calculated to interfere with the religion of the Mahomedans.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,  
March 10th, 1891.

19. The *Burdwan Sanjivani*, of the 10th March, says that the provisions of the present road cess law, under which the zemindars are required to pay the road cess due from the holders of lakhiraj lands, require to be changed. According to a recent decision of the High Court, no zemindar is entitled to recover money paid by him as road cess on account of a lakhirajdar, unless he can prove the service of the road cess notice upon the latter. And many lakhirajdars accordingly plead non-service of notice in suits brought against them by the zemindars. But road cess notices are served by the Collector; and as the zemindars have absolutely nothing to do with such service, it is certainly very improper to ask them to prove it. In cases, therefore, where a dispute shall arise between a zemindar and a lakhirajdar about the recovery of money paid as road cess, it is the Collector who should be asked to prove service of the notice, and if he cannot prove it, he should be required to pay the cost which both zemindar and lakhirajdar may incur in coming to court.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI.

The Age of Consent Bill.

20. The same paper has the following in connection with the Age of Consent Bill:—

The Viceroy is determined to pass the Bill and thereby hurt the religion and custom of his Indian subjects. The passing of the Scoble Bill will interfere with the performance of the *garbhádhán* ceremony and thereby injure the Hindu religion. But as the passing of the measure will also interfere with the custom of early marriage, it will deeply wound the feelings of Sikhs, Jains, Mahomedans and other sections of the Indian population. The whole Indian people have not yet been able to realise the danger and trouble which the measure will cause in future, and so there will be a convulsion in Hindu society when, after the passing of the measure, every one will see that the Hindu religion and the Hindu custom of early marriage have been interfered with. Have the Viceroy and his Councillors thought of all this? If they have not, is it not their duty to do so? It should be borne in mind that *dhurma* is very dear to all men, and that when wounded to the quick men lose their sense. The people of India are loyal and



peaceful, and will no doubt patiently bear all sorts of oppression, but it nevertheless behoves Government to take all things into consideration before passing the Bill. Reference is then made to the statement of Sir George Birdwood, who was in Bombay during the Sepoy mutiny, that the passing of the Widow Marriage Act helped to bring about the Mutiny, and that the interference with the custom of early marriage which is now proposed will probably lead to a still greater danger, and the following observations are made:—

Sir George Birdwood has clearly seen that the Scoble Bill will, if passed, interfere with the custom of early marriage, and has for that reason given Government a clear hint. The editor of the London *Spectator* newspaper, who also knows India, has given Government a similar hint. The writer does not apprehend any danger from the loyal Indian people, but he is, nevertheless, of opinion that cautious and considerate action is necessary in matters connected with religion.

It has been settled that the Bill will be passed on the 14th March. After the publication of the report of the Select Committee on the Bill, there is no hope that the Bill will be modified in any way. It is therefore clear that the Government has absolutely paid no heed to the opposition and agitation of the people, and is determined to interfere with the religion of the Hindus. The agitation against the Bill has taught two things:—(1) That the Hindu religion is still a living religion, and that in spite of the prevalence of English education in the country, all Hindus, with the exception of a few wrong-headed men, have still faith in that religion; (2) that Government either has no desire or no longer feels the necessity, of ruling in accordance with the wishes and inclinations of its subjects, and with a due regard for their *dharma* and caste. The Government has paid no heed to the protests made against the measure by all Indians from all sides; but the Ilbert Bill was not passed simply because it was opposed by a few Anglo-Indians. Of course, Government is not bound to hear the objections of the people if their objections be unreasonable. But can anybody say that their objections are either imaginary or unreasonable? If not, why is this Bill going to be passed? Why is Government, which has promised non-interference with the religion of its subjects, treating them so unkindly on the present occasion? All this unkindness on its part should perhaps be ascribed to the bad luck of the people.

Factory legislation.

21. The *Sahachar*, of the 11th March, has the following on the subject of the proposed factory legislation in India:—

*SAHACHAR*,  
March 11th, 1891.

Lord Salisbury knows well that the limitation of the hours of labour to eight will ruin English merchants. He is therefore unwilling to make any law on the subject in England. But the case is different as regards India, where anybody can do anything he likes. India is absolutely powerless, and the merchants of Manchester are determined to show kindness to her factory labourers. There are in India four crores of people who cannot procure even one full meal a day, and Mr. Maclean, who has taken up the cause of the Manchester merchants, does not think it necessary to look to the interests of those ill-fed men. The condition of the factory labourers in this country is good. They are well paid and well housed, and will say, if they are asked, that they are well off, and that the work they do in factories is not at all of an exhausting nature. But Manchester and her new champion say "No, your condition is very miserable, and we cannot rest until we have removed your misery." The rulers of the British Empire see through the trick which the merchants of Manchester are playing, but they connive at it. They dare not bring any pressure on the Colonies with the object of pleasing the merchants of Manchester, lest the colonies should make that a pretext for severing their connection with the Empire. And so ultimately it is poor India that suffers. The Government of India is ready to protect India's interests in this matter, but what will it do if any strict order comes from England on the subject?

The Age of Consent Bill.

22. The same paper has the following in connection with the Age of Consent Bill:—

*SAHACHAR*.

No cases under the proposed law are likely to come before the Courts unless the punishment provided for its violation is considerably reduced. Will any girl consent to send her husband to jail or to the Andamans for 10 years, and will any man or woman consent to make his or her daughter a widow in



the lifetime of her husband? The operation of the proposed law will make exactly those girls miserable for whose protection it is intended. Girls will therefore rather suffer every oppression than consent to bring complaints against their husband. Thus the law will remain a dead-letter. The opponents of the Bill as well as its supporters have alike taken exception to its punishment clause, and even the most important of the Anglo-Indian newspapers are of this opinion. A fine or imprisonment for three years, or both, should be considered sufficient. As regards fine, even a fine of five rupees should be considered sufficient in consideration of the social disgrace which will necessarily attach to the parties prosecuted under the law. All the cases under the law will be in the last instance tried by Sessions Judges with the help of jurors. But as Joint-Magistrates of three years' standing, as well as raw Cantonment Magistrates, exercise first class magisterial powers, these cases will in the first instance be tried by very incompetent men. Such officers as these should therefore have nothing to do with the trial of these cases. Again, as complaints under sections 497 and 498 of the Penal Code can be brought only by the husband of a woman or by her guardians, so complaints under the proposed law should be permitted to be brought by none but the injured girl, her parents, or some near relative. As it is, the severity of the punishment will deter a man from giving information of any violation of the law even against an enemy, and so the law will remain a dead-letter. It is, therefore, desirable that complaints under the law should in the first instance be lodged before the District Magistrate and be then tried by the officer who may be selected by him; that no Joint-Magistrates or Cantonment Magistrates should be entrusted with their trial; and that police investigations in connection with such prosecutions should be conducted in the presence of respectable villagers.

BENGAL EXCHANGE  
GAZETTE,  
March 11th, 1891.

English legislation in India.

23. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 11th March, has the following:—

In the Age of Consent Bill Government only seeks for its first pretext to interfere in the religion and social affairs of the people. That its next step will be the utter destruction of the Hindu religion admits of no doubt whatever. It is the writer's belief that Government intentionally proposed the new legislation with the view of making a display of its invincible power. But do not the authorities see that the Bill has made conspicuous a weak point in their character? For what is it but weakness in a Government to frighten its subjects and to inflict deadly wounds on their feelings for a trifling reason? Hindu society is not in a predicament which should require the interference of Government, for it still contains men who are able to remove every blot attaching to it. The Age of Consent Bill affair has disclosed a remarkable trait in the English character, which is that the English are ready to oppress the weak and the helpless, and have a knack of oppressing their loyal subjects.

The avarice of the English, too, is unquenchable. After having received from the Indians all the earthly treasures which they had to give, they are casting wistful glances upon their spiritual wealth.

The English Government has not surely forgotten that there have been mighty revolutions in England for the sake of religion, that many kings were dethroned for the same reason, and that many heirs-apparent were deprived of their just rights for holding religious opinions different from those of their subjects. But every people feel a special attachment for their own religion, and any interference with it wounds their feelings.

A law is about to be passed in Madras giving a man absolute right to his own earnings, although he may be the member of a joint-family. Will not such a law do great injustice to those members of a joint-family who are unable to earn? And does the Government think that the sorrow it will cause to such men will not be a cause of injury to itself? If any law is needed on the subject, the incapable members of a joint-family ought to be granted some share in the earnings of the working members. The law, as proposed, will create heartburning and quarrels among the members of joint-families. The proposed law aims at making the people of India more industrious. So far as the people of Bengal are concerned, they do not want such a law, for it is a pleasure to them to support a large number of relatives and dependents with their own earnings. In proposing this law, Government seems desirous of introducing among the people of this country the manners and customs of its



countrymen. In England, parents do not take any care of their children after the latter have attained majority, much after the manner of birds; and the Government seems desirous of teaching the people of this country to do what Englishmen do. It may be as well to tell the authorities that, if they do not want to wound the feelings of their subjects, they should not, in making any law, fail to pay due regard to the manners and customs of the people of this country.

24. The *Bhārat Mitra*, of the 12th March, in an article headed "The cup of poison is full to the brim, and it now remains to drink of it," says that the Indians will long

The Age of Consent Bill.

remember the names of the present members of the Viceroy's Legislative Council with the exception of that of Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter. The only amendment that has been made in the Bill was suggested by the High Court.

It now comes to this then that a Hindu husband will be held guilty of rape if he cohabits with his wife, his second self, before she has completed her twelfth year, although she may be quite a young woman.

It seems the authorities are determined to pass the Bill at any risk.

25. The *Banganivāsi*, of the 13th March, says:—Our life is about to depart; we can bear no more. Englishmen! look even now with a kindly eye and save the whole

The Age of Consent Bill.

Hindu race, the whole Indian population. Alas, what an unexpected result! The Hindu's religious world is to-day topsy-turvy. To-day the Hindu is alarmed, startled, stupefied. He has lost his sense and is gone mad. When the Bill has passed through the Select Committee and has been placed in the Viceroy's hands it is as good as passed. Sir Romesh Chunder has been vanquished, and Nulkar and others have gained their object. Governor-General! Lord Lansdowne! do us justice; do not hurl your thunderbolt upon the Hindu's head. Master, just consider that the life and death of thousands of men and women depend upon a single word from your lips. Master, give the Hindus what they beg of you—their treasure of *dharma*, their whole wealth in life, dearer to them than life itself. Sovereign as you are, perform a Sovereign's duty, and raise for yourself an imperishable monument in India. If you protect the subject, the King of Kings, the Emperor of Emperors, the Guru of Gurus, the Lord of the Universe will be pleased with you. Ruler! do not oppress the Hindu in a manner which will amount to your taking away his life. Alas, alas, what ruin is this again that is about to befall the believing Hindu, who has so long served his dying *dharma* and performed the observances of his religion to the best of his ability! Alas, has the golden flame suddenly flashed out before being extinguished? Lord of the Universe, merciful Hari, dispense your mercy and grant your protection at this time to them that are alarmed and seek your protection.

It must be a great disappointment to the Hindu that the proposed law will not only have the effect of checking the Hindu religious revival, the signs of which have been discernible during the last few years, but will also lead to the abolition of the few observances that yet remain to testify to the existence of the Hindu religion.

That *garbhadhan* is one of the principal religious *sanskars* of the Hindus is being stated by every Hindu. But who is there to listen to this? Who can awaken the man who is wide awake but affects to sleep? Government is acting like that man, and has turned a deaf ear to the piteous cries of thousands of Hindu men and women. In the twinkling of an eye, and with a smile on their faces, and beating the drum of victory, have the Select Committee recommended the passing of the Bill, thus hurling a dire thunderbolt on the Hindu's head and fulfilling the wishes of the enemy. Everything now depends on the Governor-General's wish. Lord Lansdowne! do justice to the people. Protect the Hindus, save them from this danger. The *garbhadhan sanskar* is, as it were, the very life of the Hindu religion; if that life is struck against, the mighty tree of the Hindu religion will be destroyed by the root and will in time cease to exist. If, therefore, the Bill must be passed, our prayer is, do not fix an age limit for Hindu girls. If, on the contrary, you are desirous of abolishing the caste distinctions and similar observances of the Hindus, and making a hodge-podge of all men and classes, do you say so plainly and we shall not utter another word. Alas, the Hindu has cried so much, entreated and

BHARAT MITRA,  
March 12th, 1891.

BANGANIVASI,  
March 13th, 1891.



implored so much, and made known his feeling and mental agony so much, and still your heart has not melted! Lady Lansdowne! You are a woman and you possess a tender heart. Woman as you are, you can well understand a woman's feelings. Lady, will you too be stony-hearted at such a time as this? Do you, Lady, explain the matter to your Lord, and taking his hands in your own entreat him. Dearest to him than his life as you are, he will be unable to disregard your request and will assuredly make some amendments in the Bill. If you do so, the Hindu woman will in return bless you for all time, and the blessing will bear fruit. Wife of the Viceroy, will not this pathetic appeal of the Hindu woman melt even your heart? And Sir Charles Elliott, will you too remain indifferent at such a time? Can you not, with a slight effort, bring about a change in the Viceroy's views? Be it Lord Lansdowne, or be it Sir Andrew Scoble, they cannot but listen to your pleadings. Ruler of Bengal, will you too not listen to the cries of the Bengalis?

Where art thou, Mother Kali, who grantest protection and removest the fear of death? Mother, protect us in this dire Kali yuga. Mother, we have understood that unless thou showest mercy, the Sovereign will not show mercy. Mother, consort of Shiva, thou art the head of chaste womanhood. Then where art thou, Mother, in this day of distress? Mother of the Universe, see the chastity of the Hindu woman, of her who is born of thy holy self, is about to disappear. Come, Mother, come, and console the Hindu with the words "No fear," "No fear." Appear, O Mother, in thy terror-striking form, and either destroy at once this creation of thine which is so dear to thee, or save the lives of the Hindus. See, Mother, the *shakti-shel* (fatal dart) has pierced the Hindu's breast, and the Hindu is almost dead with sorrow, wounded sense of honour, insult, and persecution. See, Mother, thy devoted sons incurring the sin of suicide. See, Mother, they are forsaking the holy duties of householders, imbibing impure habits, and plunging themselves into the deep depths of hell, on account of the tortuousness of the English law, and their unfortunate and helpless women are indulging in vice and forsaking the great virtue of chastity. Alas, Mother, how shall we Hindus witness such sights? Then, Mother, say, and, appearing in the sky, say in a voice choked with emotion, "Do not fear, my son, I have come. I shall protect you from this danger." Victory to Mother Raksha Kali.

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26. The same paper says:—It is because the proposed law is injurious that we are throwing so many obstacles and difficulties in your way. But so unkind are you that without listening to our representations, and for the purpose of acting in an arbitrary manner, you are thrusting this dreadful law upon us by force, in disregard of all reasoning and argument, and with a view to cause our destruction. You are the rulers, and we are therefore unable to say anything by way of protest. But if this improper law had been introduced by anyone else, degraded, lifeless and unarmed though we be, we could never have tolerated the act of oppression. We would have, in that case, prostrated ourselves at the feet of the British Government and cried and begged for protection, and told it everything for the purpose of securing the safety and happiness of our families. But the Sovereign before whom we would cry is herself enacting that improper law to-day, and we are therefore helpless.

Thinking that the rulers did not understand the true state of things, we at first explained matters to them, and setting forth our woes cried before them. Millions, nay, crores of people made known their mental agony to the rulers. But not even all this has succeeded in changing the views and opinions of the rulers. They are so cruel that they have given no hearing to the cries of their subjects. Nor have the representations of the newspapers received a hearing. If what is stated in the newspapers does not reach the ears of the rulers, what is the good of keeping newspapers in India? It will probably be enough if only the newspapers which are conducted by Englishmen exist. For the editors of those papers belong to the ruling race. It is certain that the English will not oppress Englishmen, and the latter will never be dissatisfied if they are not oppressed. If they are ever again dissatisfied, if they are again oppressed by any law like the Ilbert Bill, then shall we see what the English will do in the way of discharging their kingly duties.



If it is the ruler's wish to do injury to the subject, if it is the ruler's object to harass the subject, if it is the ruler's desire to oppress and harass the quiet and inoffensive, religiously-disposed and law-abiding subject, do not attempt to destroy his religion—rather take by force our houses which are our kingdoms, just as you have taken the State of the Maharaja of Cashmere—insult us as you have insulted the Guicowar, try to drive us out of this country as Theebaw has been driven out of his. We shall still be happy in our minds, and think that we have been able to maintain our religion inviolate in the midst of so much oppression. But if you interfere with our religion and harass us within and without by improper laws like the Age of Consent Bill, will our *bhakti* for you remain unimpaired? How will our confidence in you remain unshaken? What will be the difference, in that case, between a ruler and a destroyer of life?

Then how shall we say that you have left the ways of your ancestors and become civilised and educated? How shall we say that you wish well to the subject? It is true we have been to some extent benefited by you. But you have injured us far more than you have benefited us. A careful consideration of all that you have done makes it clear that under English rule we suffer hardships to an extent which would not probably have been exceeded if we had been governed by the most uncivilised nation.

The writer then proceeds to say that the English education given to the Indians is of the most imperfect and demoralising kind, making them lose their respect for their parents and elders. The railways have done them more harm than good by obstructing the natural drainage of the country and thus producing much sickness among the people. Free trade and foreign competition have destroyed the native industries and manufactures and made famine more frequent than before.

But not even all this has satisfied you, and you are to-day passing this law for the purpose of destroying our happiness and domestic virtues. It is not a new attempt you are making, you have been making the attempt for a long time, though in a different form. You have introduced female education in our country in order to ruin us. The introduction of female education has not produced the results you expected; and the reason of this is that our goddesses are not so shameless, harsh-tongued, and devoid of virtue as your women. It is only the excommunicated and the apostates from religion whom you are able to educate up to an advanced age. The Hindu girls cease to come in contact with you from the time immediately preceding their marriage. Contact with you produces injurious consequences, and the education which you give can never make the goddesses in our zenanas happy. You make no distinction between respectable women and prostitutes; you place the *devi* (goddess) and the *rakshasi* (female demon) on an equal footing, and you thus compass their ruin. It was only the other day, on the occasion of the distribution of prizes to the girls of the Entally female school, that a prostitute was invited and brought to witness the ceremony which was graced by the presence of the wife of the Lieutenant-Governor. It is in this way that our goddess-like Hindu girls are insulted at your places of instruction. The prostitute whom we hate with all our heart, who is ostracised from family and society alike, and with whom society hates to sit on the same seat, is allowed by you to come to the school, and it is thus that you insult our goddesses. This is the result of your education!

Many patriotic Englishmen, well acquainted with the condition of the Indians, are advising Government to withdraw the Age of Consent Bill. But the Government of India is so selfish, so foolish, and so short-sighted that, in disregard of their advice, it is about to pass the Bill for the purpose of injuring India and our society and destroying the Indian Empire. We are sorry for this; but who is there to listen to us?

There can be no State without subjects. If in a State the subject's religion is destroyed in consequence of any improper law made by the ruler, and if from a fear of the loss of his religion a strong current of discontent flows through his heart and impairs every day the relations subsisting between him and his ruler, it is well for the State to be soon destroyed. There can be no doubt that the destruction of that State would be beneficial to ruler and ruled alike. When in consequence of anything done by the ruler great uneasiness begins to be produced in the subject's mind, the ruler must cease to expect any help from the subject.



The destruction of an Emperor, be he the Emperor of Delhi or the most powerful and invincible potentate or the British Government, is inevitable if he does not receive the help of his subjects. The subject is the ruler's friend—the subject is also the ruler's inveterate enemy. The destruction of that State is impossible in which good feeling exists between the ruler and the ruled. We have repeatedly explained this to the rulers, but they are not understanding it. The newspaper is their counsellor, and so, if they are unable to understand anything, we shall try to explain it to them. We have cried, but in vain; and not only have we cried in vain, but we have also understood that the English are short-sighted, that the hearts of our rulers are made of iron, and that by following the advice of the Secretary of State the British Government has wholly lost its senses.

The Government of India and Lord Lansdowne are not strong enough to make any protests. The proposed law will produce extremely injurious consequences. It will make it impossible for young men and women to preserve their character unsullied, and thus lead to the ruin of the Indians. The English will cease to be regarded as a civilised nation if such a disaster befall the Indians under their rule. It has been clearly pointed out to Government that the proposed law will injure the people in various ways. But the Government does not admit this, because it has gone mad over the Bill; and a mad man does not listen to good advice. It was madness which led to Ravan's becoming the instrument of the destruction of his own race, which led the sons of Dhritrashtra to insult the Lord of the three worlds, which caused the deposition of the Guicowar, and which brought about the dethronement and humiliation of Theebaw. You, too, in your madness, have brought ruin upon us, destroyed our religion, and created troubles in your empire. Englishmen! we have failed to understand you. We have lived under your rule, have received your education, have studied your character and sentiments and even the history of your nation, and yet we have failed to know what you are. You are more cunning than the jackal. You are *Yama* (death) to the weak, but to the strong you are like the servant who lies prostrate at the feet. You are sometimes on the side of Rama and sometimes on the side of Shyama. You are now disregarding the advice of those at whose advice you reduced the Durga Puja holidays.

That the proposed law will interfere with our religion is the opinion of Pundit Iswara Chandra Vidyasagara and all other learned Sanskrit scholars of these provinces. There is only one un-Hindu Shastri, who has eaten Government's salt and is anxious to better his worldly prospects, and who does not care for his caste and dharma. Why does not the thunderbolt fall upon his head and consume him? Perhaps he is too contemptible to be visited with such punishment.

SAMAY,  
March 13th, 1891.

27. The *Samay*, of the 13th March, refers to some recent writings in the *Bangavasi*, the *Banganivasi*, and the *Danik-o-Samāchar Chandrika* in connection with the Age of Consent Bill, and observes as follows:—

The writer well knows that no man of sense and education will be moved by such writings by foolish men devoid of all sense of responsibility. But he fears lest Government should on account of these writings try once more to curtail the liberty of the Bengali newspaper press. It will be no wonder if Government should take that step. For already the question of seditious writing in the Bengali press is being discussed in the *Englishman* and the *Daily News* and other papers. The *Bangavasi* and other papers, it must be admitted, have become extremely insolent, and that means that they will soon fall. They are writing in this manner with the object of gaining public applause and increasing the number of their subscribers. But the whole country will suffer if Government revives the Press Act on account of their writings. Enemies of the country like the *Bangavasi* and others ought to be destroyed.

The writer also says:—No one who is not extremely foolish can now object to the Bill on religious grounds. So long as the public did not know what the real meaning of the sastras as regards *garbhadhan* was, and so long as the mistakes made by Sasadhar and others in interpreting the sastras were not pointed out and explained, so long the *garbhadhan* question greatly exercised their minds. But now every sensible and impartial man is abandoning the



sastric ground. It has been clearly pointed out in this and other papers that the proposed measure will not in the least interfere with any religious custom. This view has been supported by the Maharajas of Durbhunga, Benares, Vizianagram, Travancore, and Jeypore, who are known to be prominent Hindus. The Maharaja of Jeypore, who is a thorough Hindu and the ruler of a Hindu State, has not only supported the Scoble Bill, but gone further and made a law in his State prohibiting the marriage of girls before 15 and of boys before 18—a law against the which Hindus of Jeypore have offered not a word of protest or complaint.

The proposed law is certainly better than the law which it will supersede. The existing law gives much scope to police oppression, but the proposed law does not. All fear of false prosecutions is baseless. The nature of the evidence that will be required to sustain a prosecution will make it impossible for outsiders to bring complaints under this law, and the provision of the law requiring the punishment of those who bring false cases will discourage prosecutions made with the object of satisfying private grudge. As regards the fear that the passing of the law will necessitate the medical examination of girls against their wish, it, too, is absolutely baseless. For, under the law, no one can examine a girl against her wish without making himself liable to severe penalties. The writer would like to see some more modifications introduced into the Bill, and cannot understand why the modifications which have been proposed by him have not been accepted by the Select Committee.

The Select Committee's report  
on the Age of Consent Bill.

28. The same paper refers to the Select Committee's report on the Age of Consent Bill, and observes as follows:—

SAMAY.  
March 13th, 1891.

The amendment proposed by the Committee that no Magistrate other than a first class Magistrate should try cases under the proposed law is certainly a very good one. This amendment was one of those proposed by this paper, and the writer is glad that the Select Committee has accepted it. Unlike the Deputy Magistrate, the District Magistrate never mixes in village party politics, and so there will be no miscarriage of justice owing to party bias from his deciding cases under the proposed law. And as the District Magistrate is feared by village people, they will hesitate to bring false charges before him. The objection taken by some against this amendment that as the District Magistrate is generally a foreigner professing a different faith from that of the people there will be very little chance of their obtaining justice at his hands has not much force in it. Some District Magistrates are no doubt found to be incompetent, but no one can say that all District Magistrates are incompetent officers. Besides, as both the complainant and the defendant in a case under the proposed law will be natives, the chance of miscarriage of justice will be almost nil. The provision that cases under the new law may be tried in Sessions Courts with the help of a jury also removes all apprehension of miscarriage of justice.

The writer also approves of the Committee's amendment that the police investigations that will be necessary under the law should be held by police officers not inferior in rank to Inspectors. The writer would, however, like to see two more amendments made in the Bill—one to the effect that offences under the proposed law, when committed by a husband, should not be considered "rape," and be called by some other name; and another to the effect that, as husbands will never injure their wives intentionally, the punishment should be as follows:—

- (a).—When a husband is guilty of cohabiting with a wife who is under 12 years of age, and the injury or hurt resulting from the cohabitation is of trifling nature, the maximum punishment should be a fine of Rs. 500.
- (b).—If such injury or hurt be of a serious nature, the maximum punishment should be two years' imprisonment and a fine which may amount to Rs. 500.
- (c).—As young couples in this country often sleep together at the bidding of their parents or other guardians, whenever a husband is proved to have violated the law in acting in accordance with their order, his parents or guardians, as the case may be, should be heavily fined.



SAMAY.  
March 13th, 1891.

Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter's  
dissent minute.

29. The same paper thus criticises Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter's minute of dissent on the Age of Consent Bill.

Sir Romesh Chunder's views seem to have considerably changed since the introduction of the measure. In his minute of dissent, Sir Romesh has not taken his stand on the *garbhadhan* argument, and has given expression to views which even the supporters of the measure did not dare to advance. His sole objection against the proposed law now is that it will remain a dead letter. He says that if the practice of early cohabitation exists in the country, it exists in spite of its prohibition in the shastras, and it is not therefore likely that the proposed law will be able to check it. To this it may be replied that the shastras now-a-days possess very little influence over men's minds, and the law is much more feared and respected than the shastras. His other objection to the measure is that after its passing respectable women will be obliged to give evidence in Court. But are they not under the same obligation even under the existing law? If so, why ask for the withdrawal of the measure on that ground?

Sir Romesh Chunder says that the proposed law will remain a dead letter. If so, it will do neither harm nor good, and its passing should not be objected to. His statement that the majority of the people of the country are opposed to the measure is not true. The law is intended for all India, and it is only the majority of the people of Bengal who are opposed to it. Mussulmans, Christians, Jains, Buddhists, and Hindus of other Indian provinces are not opposed to its passing. But supposing that the majority of the people of India are opposed to the measure, that is no reason why the Bill should not be passed. Sutte was abolished, and the Widow Marriage Act was passed in spite of similar opposition. Referring to the educative effect of the measure, Sir Romesh says that, as the existing ten-year law has failed to produce any such effect, the proposed law will also fail in that direction. But the reason why the ten-year law failed to produce the desired effect is that very few people knew of its existence. The provisions of the proposed law have, on the other hand, become extensively known in the country, and the law is therefore likely to have much educative effect. The writer does not approve of the proposal to make puberty the age of consent. Such a proposal will, if given effect to, necessitate the personal examination of girls, a procedure which will open a wide door to oppression. The proposal to make the 12th year the age of consent is free from any such objection, and the more so as Government will shortly make a law ensuring an improved system of birth registration. The statement made by some that as the occurrence of the first menstruation is marked by much festivity and rejoicing among the Hindus, it will be easy to prove that event, has not much force. For, as the law is intended for all classes of Indian people, and as that event is not celebrated among non-Hindus in the Hindu manner, how is the event to be proved in the case of those who are not Hindus? Besides, the fixing of the age of consent at puberty will induce many Hindus to celebrate that event falsely, or to hasten its occurrence by artificial means; and so, in the long run, medical examination will have to be resorted to as the only means of determining whether puberty has really occurred or not. The writer fully approves of the amendments proposed by Sir Romesh Chunder in relation to the character of the offence under the proposed law and the punishment. On the whole, the change which has taken place in Sir Romesh Chunder's views on the subject has given satisfaction to the writer.

SAMAY.

30. Babu Ramgopal Mukerjee and Babu Guru Nath Acharjya of Saduhati

A case of cruelty to a child-wife.

in the district of Jessore, writing to the same paper, mention a case of oppression which was committed some months ago by one Dina Nath Pramanik of their village on his girl-wife 10 to 11 years old. The oppression resulted in grave injury. The girl was treated by Dr. Durgadas Kar, and the wound took 20 to 22 days to heal up.

SUDHAKAR,  
March 13th, 1891.

31. Referring to the paragraph in the *Sanjivani* headed "An argument in support of the Age of Consent Bill" (see Report on Native Papers for 14th March 1891, paragraph 33), the *Sudhakar*, of the 13th March, makes the

The *Sanjivani* and the Age of Consent Bill.

following remarks:—

Argument indeed! There is no doubt that when the Bill is passed many people will have to marry girls who have already become mothers of children,



and many will become fathers five or six months after their marriage. Heaven only knows how cases of foeticide will rapidly increase in the land when the law is passed!

The Age of Consent Bill

32. The same paper says that the Age of Consent Bill will surely be passed. The authorities will on no account give up their resolution to pass it. The wailings of the whole Indian population have failed to move the hearts of His Excellency and the Members of his Council. The rulers seem delighted, as it were, at the prospect of seriously wounding the religious feelings of the people, and the Anglo-Indian editors are clapping their hands for very joy. The Bill will be passed exactly in the form in which it stands, and it is decided that it will be passed at the Council's sitting of 20th March next. The rulers have attached greater weight to the opinions of only 26,000 out of a total population of 260,000,000. The orthodox party can therefore now do nothing but weep. But Government should take note that it will very probably have to reap in the course of time the harvest of mischief of which it is now sowing the seed. Those who desire the good of the British Empire are really terrified.

SUDHAKAR,  
March 13th, 1891.

The Age of Consent Bill.

33. The *Urdu Guide and Darussaltanat*, of the 13th March, says that the general opinion in regard to the Age of Consent Bill is that it will, if passed into law, ruin the honour of all respectable people, and that, if it is passed, it should be passed with the amendment that none but the parents of the injured girl shall have power to bring a charge. The writer observes that it will not be well for Government to pass the law against the general wish.

URDU GUIDE, AND  
DARUSSALTANAT,  
March 13th, 1891.

34. The *Education Gazette*, of the 13th March, refers to Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter and Chunder Mitter's minute of dissent on the Age of Consent Bill, and observes as follows:—

EDUCATION GAZETTE,  
March 13th, 1891

Since the introduction of the measure, Sir Romesh Chunder has done his duty in a calm and fearless manner, and has by so doing won the lasting gratitude of the people of India. It is to be regretted, however, that he is not in favour of early marriage. He would have maintained his representative character in the fullest measure if he had thought, with Sir George Birdwood, that it is the custom of early marriage that has contributed to the unapproachable simplicity, affection, reverence and purity of the Hindu family life.

35. The *Sanjivani*, of the 14th March, says that from the very introduction of the Age of Consent Bill, the writer has been putting forward the view that the attainment of puberty would be a better limit to fix than any definite age. The reason why the writer has taken this view of the matter is that the age of twelve, which has been proposed, will protect only a very small number of girls from cruelty. The theory that Indian girls generally attain puberty between ten and twelve is now an exploded one, and eminent doctors now say that the majority of Indian girls attain puberty after their thirteenth year. According to Dr. Nicholson, seventy-two per cent. of Indian girls attain puberty after the twelfth year, and according to Dr. Harris, sixty-one per cent. of Indian girls attain puberty after that age. It is clear, therefore, that the proposed law will save only a third part of Indian girls from oppression, leaving the remaining two-thirds as unprotected as ever. The law as proposed cannot, therefore, be regarded as being a wise one. And if Sir Andrew Scoble's argument for not fixing fourteen years as the age of consent is admitted to be a sound one, the admission itself constitutes an argument for fixing puberty as the age of consent. Sir Andrew said that to fix fourteen years would be to bring about a violent and abrupt revolution in the social life of the Indians, which would frustrate the object of the law. But a law making puberty the age of consent would not shock Hindu feeling, because it would be in consonance with the Hindu Sastras, and would not be open even to the objection which can be urged against the twelve-year proposal. Indeed, a law making puberty the age of consent would have been supported by all the Hindu pandits and the entire Indian community, and would have protected a much larger number of girls than a twelve-year law will. The Shastras enjoin the performance of the *puspotsab* ceremony only on the attainment of puberty, and the writer doubts whether, if puberty had been fixed as the age limit, it would have been at all possible for any man to hold intercourse with a girl below twelve years of age.

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The objection that puberty as the age of consent would encourage deceptive practices is one which applies also to the 12-year proposal. Indeed, the objection applies with greater force to the 12-year proposal than to the puberty proposal. Besides, it is much easier to ascertain puberty than age; and as regards deception taken by itself, there was the Penal Code to punish and check it. It is to be regretted that the blind opponents of the Bill have not considered it proper to accept and act upon the advice which has been given by this paper to ask Government to make puberty the age of consent. If the whole country, acting on this advice, had prayed Government to fix puberty as the age of consent, Government, it is certain, could not have slighted the prayer. Babu Bhudhar Chatterjee, editor of the *Vedavyasa*, and the chief disciple of Pundit Sasadhar Tarkachuramani, said to the writer that puberty would be the most fitting limit to fix as the age of consent.

The agitators have taken care not to collect the opinions of those doctors and midwives who do not agree with them on the question. Efforts have been made to bring them round, and where such efforts have failed, as in the cases of Dr. Suryyakumar Sarvadhikari and Surgeon-Major Dharmadas Bose, the opinions given have been suppressed.

The writer has already given several cases of brutal conduct towards child-wives by their husbands in the mofussil. That such cases seldom come to the notice of medical men in Calcutta is explained by the fact that ice which often suffices to stop hæmorrhage is easily procurable in Calcutta, and that the Calcutta people being familiar with various medicines for stopping hæmorrhage, and having homœopathic medicines within their reach, can dispense with medical aid when child-wives suffer from the effects of premature cohabitation.

The writer respects anything that is said by those Hindus who strictly adhere to Hinduism; but he cannot help feeling contempt for the Hindu religion when its followers, who eat forbidden food, enjoy the company of forbidden women, and commit other sins which the Hindu shastras declare unexpiable, are not excommunicated from Hindu society. The Hindu religion must surely be very near its end when people who commit every un-Hindu act stand forward as leaders of the Hindu community in order to ruin girls of immature years, and when Hindu pundits place themselves under the guidance of such leaders. Hypocrisy never saved a religion.

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36. A correspondent writing in the same paper severely condemns the *Bangavasi* and the Age of Consent Bill. *Bangavasi* newspaper for representing Hindu girls of ten years of age as breaking through all restraint after the passing of the Age of Consent Bill in order to gratify their lust. Does every Hindu marry his daughter at ten years of age, and is there not in any Hindu family a single girl of twelve years of age that has not been married? Every Hindu hates early marriage, and there are hundreds of Hindu homes where girls remain unmarried after their twelfth year. And do such girls run about the streets inflamed with lust and craving its gratification? The picture of a girl not married at ten years of age, as drawn by the *Bangavasi*, is an abominable picture indeed. Indeed, the *Bangavasi* makes no difference between a Hindu girl and a she-demon.

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37. A correspondent of the same paper, writing from Moorshedabad, reports a case of brutal conduct towards a child-wife, who died immediately from the effects of the violence. The Civil Surgeon of Berhampore has given it as his opinion that death was caused by hæmorrhage. The offender admitted his guilt before the Magistrate. Will the *garbhādhān* doctors now say that they have never heard of such cases?

BANGAVASI,  
March 14th, 1891.

The Age of Consent Bill.

Age of Consent Bill:—

38. The *Bangavasi*, of the 14th March, makes the following observations in connection with the

- (1) The modification, proposed in the Bill, namely that the power of bringing a charge will be vested only in the Magistrate, and that all investigations and enquiries will be made by the higher police authorities, will be even more mischievous than the provisions of the Bill as they now stand. The modification is a horrible one indeed! All investigations will be made by the



higher police authorities, but how many among those authorities are men of the country?

- (2) The opposition is as strong as ever. This paper received a very large number of letters during the week ending the 7th March. Meetings are being held at several places. The whole Hindu community is in the state of anxious suspense of the mother whose child in his last moments is gasping for breath, but is not quite dead. The people have not yet given up all hope, and are still seeking for means by which to move the heart of Government. Oh the treacherous promptings of hope!
- (3) The frightful mouth of that son of a Brahman, who is a traitor to his country, a *kulángár*, and a dependent on Sudras, is proclaiming the monster meeting on the *maidan* to have been seditious. Only convince the authorities in England that more than a hundred thousand people successfully carried out a rebellion in front of the impregnable fort of the English, and in the teeth of fierce cannon, and they will at once not only withdraw the Age of Consent Bill, but give up to the Indians the entire Indian Empire, not excepting even Burma. It is, indeed, a matter of surprise that even the authorities in this country and the authorities in England in a much greater degree refuse to believe this. The fools of Bengal think that people all over the whole world are fools.
- (4) The Indian Factories Bill will be passed next Friday. There is much to be said in regard to this Bill; but with what face is anything more to be said? Moreover, there is not sufficient power left in the people to say anything, seeing that the deadly shaft of the Age of Consent Bill has already been aimed at their heart. Men have not time to think of anything else. The Factories Bill involves only the question of livelihood, while the Age of Consent Bill affects the religion of the people. The Hindu does not die in a day or two for want of food; but when his religious feelings are wounded, he cannot endure this life even for a moment.
- (5) The submission of the Select Committee's Report on the Age of Consent Bill was deferred for a week because the opinions of the high officials did not reach the Committee in time. Those opinions must have reached the Committee by this time, but hell-creatures of this earth as the Indians are, they have not as yet seen those opinions. Government has not let them know a jot about these opinions; for what reason is best known to the far-sighted Government itself. The only thing the people want is that Government should show them these opinions if there is no objection to its doing so. It would be a consolation to them to know that they have, even at this critical moment, some friends among the civilians.
- (6) The Hindu, to whom religion is dearer than life itself, does not know how to save that religion at the present crisis. What to do, where to go, whom to appeal to, these are thoughts that are driving him mad, really mad. He was never before placed in such a crisis. He cannot make out why the English Government is acting in this fashion. Its action is an enigma to him. The whole history of British policy in this country fails to explain this mystery. Even an intelligent English celebrity has admitted that, though a careful student of the British constitution in India, he has failed to understand the policy of Government in taking such a firm resolution to pass the Age of Consent Bill. The Hindus entreat the Government to explain this mystery. An explanation will somewhat allay their anxiety.

The English do not consider it necessary to attach any importance to the representation of an indigent and destitute people like the Indians, or they would not have introduced a Bill which is calculated to destroy their religion. If the Indians themselves had understood this, surely they would not have seen any



cause to blame the English and breathe hot sighs of grief for the destruction of their religion. The British Lion, monarch of all the world as he is, has not his reliance on strength of arms, nor does he fear strength of arms. His only fear is injury to his commercial interests; but such injury is not likely to come from the Indians, or the rulers of India would not be so displeased with them. Any one who has sense will see that what is going to destroy the religion is again the very thing which can protect it.

(7) It is the ill-luck of the Indians that has brought about such a thing. It is true the English rulers did not anticipate so strong an opposition. But the meeting on the *maidan* must have convinced them of the character and magnitude of the opposition to the Bill. But there is no help now. The rulers stand committed. It has now become with them a question of "prestige" to pass the Bill. The *maidan* meeting has undoubtedly agitated their minds, but the withdrawal of the Bill will affect British "prestige" in India. Alas! that the master should, in order only to save his own prestige, thus hurl the thunderbolt at the heads of his most obedient servants who look to him for their bread. The poor obedient servants prostrate themselves before the master, and like the frogs in the fable call out to him to save them, for what is sport to him is death to them. What more can they say?

(8) It is too late to try the effect of medicines any longer. The patient must now resign himself to his fate. Agitation, petitions, meetings, protest telegrams to the Viceroy will be of no avail any more. There is no time to weep or lament. The patient is now on the point of death; his pulse has all but stopped beating, and his whole body is benumbed. At this last stage it remains for him only to utter aloud the name of the goddess *Kali*. Placing themselves on the bank of the Ganges, the people have now only to invoke the goddess; they should now come to Kalighat and cry "Jai Kali, Jai Kali" (victory to Kali), so that infinite space may reverberate with the sound.

(9) Why has such a thing come to pass? and why are things drifting to such a conclusion? This is a question which has often arisen in the writer's mind. He will therefore no longer conceal the answer he has found for this question. The rulers of India, too punctilious about their honour, will on no account give way to the people. They do not, moreover, like to witness a desirable development of the democratic spirit in this country. All this is seriously averred by some people, who say that the rulers are unwilling to lose their prestige and have resolved to maintain their *ijjut* at any cost. But if the dictates of truth and justice are to be followed, Government cannot but recognise the democratic spirit. And this thought fills its whole heart, as well it may, for it is not a question to make light of. The Indians do not find it in their nature to conceive of a dishonoured king. The Hindu knows how to feel delight in his sovereign's honour, and he regards his sovereign as an incarnation of the Deity. And can a Hindu bear to see his sovereign dishonoured? The Hindu looks upon his protector as his father. You English rulers! do you really fear that the withdrawal of the Bill at the request of your subjects will diminish your prestige? Do you really think that that will be giving way to your subjects? The Shashtra-knowing Brahmins and pundits, who are the natural leaders of Hindu society, have taken the lead in the matter of petitioning the Government, and have been joined by those of their countrymen who have been recognized by you as educated, singled out by you for the bestowal of special honours, and are held by you in high respect. The half-educated subjects of the Crown feel stunned and see nothing but darkness on all sides. The uneducated masses are bewildered. You should know that the matter has drawn tears



to many eyes, and also filled many hearts with new energy. People are busy paying visits, consulting and devising means. Do you know why they are doing all this? They are doing all this for the protection of their religion and society, two things the importance of which need not be explained to you, seeing that Her Majesty herself is called the "Defender of the Faith." It would certainly be no diminution of the honour and prestige of the "Defender of the Faith," the most pious Empress of India, to listen to the cries of the people who are appealing to her for the protection of their religion.

Her sons do not ask anything from her; they only pray to her to observe her own promise, as it is the duty of a sovereign to redeem his pledges. And if she listens to this prayer of her people, her crown will only shine brighter.

(10) The monarch who rules supreme over a wide, rich and populous country like India must be a very fortunate monarch indeed! And it is the good fortune of the English to be the undisputable monarch of this vast realm, to have their own Queen for its Empress. The Queen of England bears the title of Empress in virtue only of her Indian possessions. The English are not supreme in any of their possessions in the four quarters of the globe except India; nor is Her Majesty Empress in any other possessions of hers except India. The English have not, in all the world, a single possession, except India, where they exercise supreme control over both people and their produce. The history which the English have themselves written bears testimony to the fact that England is rich with India's wealth, and is respected only on account of her Indian possessions. It is therefore the duty of every Englishman to try to perpetuate England's supremacy in India. And every Englishman fulfils this duty.

The only means of keeping India in perpetual subjection to the English Crown is to keep her people contented. There can be no doubt that the British Empire in this country will not last if the people are disaffected; for guns, gun powder, and the police have never held any country in perpetual subjection. A country may be, indeed, acquired by force of arms, but that force will not avail to keep it in subjection for ever. The man who would keep India in perpetual subjection to the British Crown by force of arms, does not certainly possess more common sense than the man who considers himself safe sitting on an embankment of sand erected in the middle of the sea. It may be stated without hesitation that the English could, by no means, have become possessed of the Indian Empire if the Indian people had not helped them, by counsel and strength of arms, in conquering it. The Empire has been gained with the help of the Indians; it must also be maintained with their help. It will not do to displease them. The English rulers know this, and they are, therefore, always anxious to please them.

The Hindus, the Mussulmans, all the nationalities of India in fact, live solely for their religion. And as regards the Hindu and Mahomedan religions, their observance consists in the observance of customs. Any interference with those customs therefore wound their feelings. The English rulers have learnt from experience the danger of interfering with the religion or the customs of the Indian people; they have also learnt that interference with their customs means interference with their religion. The English always knew this, but the Sepoy Mutiny convinced them more strongly of this fact. Heaven forbid that even an enemy should be convinced of any thing in that fashion!

It will be easy for the English to please the Indians if they do not interfere with their religion. It is only a few millions out of the entire population of this country who are occupied with the higher questions of politics, political economy and commerce; the great mass of the Indian people are content if they are allowed to follow, without obstruction, their religion and customs, and they do not then care whether they have to live from hand to mouth. The English Government will never come to grief if it takes a firm resolution never to interfere with the religion or customs of its subject—a very easy means of consolidating an Empire. The mischief that is committed from time to time is



due to the pledges of the Government not being always carefully and fully observed. The path is easy, but the authorities make it at times difficult by their own fault, and on account of their own ill-luck and the ill-luck of their subjects. It is a pity that it should be so.

(11). India contains 250,000,000 souls, of this number nearly a half are males ; and of these one hundred and twenty millions of males at least sixty millions are adults, and it may be fairly assumed that these adults are not all weak and timid Bengalis. And as regards Bengalis there are even among them many that are brave, strong, and sturdy.

However that may be, it is the duty of the Sovereign to keep all classes of his subjects—weak or strong, timid or bold—contented and faithful to his Crown. For even an ant is able to bite a lion ; and loyalty and disloyalty are both very infectious things. All the Indian people are loyal. But loyalty increases in proportion as the contentment of a people increases. As there is no limit to the contentment of a people, so there is no limit to the degree of a people's loyalty.

Fatalists as the Hindus are, they remain content under the severest oppression with blaming their own lot ; they do not rashly blame their governor for the oppressions to which they are subjected. It does not consist with the Hindu shastras to blame the king, who is looked upon as a god. And the king must be very unfortunate indeed who incurs the displeasure of such contented subjects.

The Mahomedans too are a loyal people, and naturalisation in India has made fatalists of them too. And the Hindus, the Mussalmans, the Sikhs, and the Jains all seek personal peace and contentment. The Sikhs, under their leader Guru Govinda, rebelled against their Mahomedan rulers only when their peace and contentment were threatened and they were subjected to intolerable oppression. They took up arms against the Moghul Emperors only in self-defence.

Liberty is dear to all. And it was quite natural for the Sikhs, the Mahrattas, and the Rajputs to have, in the first instance, and under the direction of their leaders, opposed the establishment of British rule in their country. But there is no opposition to the British rule any longer, for there is no longer cause for making such opposition. The Mahomedans, too, have come to understand that the English have been made their rulers by the will of God. And seeing that they are enabled to pass their days in security, and to perform their religious rites without hindrance, the Indians do not see any reason to oppose British supremacy in this country. The English are protecting the people from external as well as internal enemies, and are paying every attention to the comforts of the people. The Indian public are never displeased with their rulers for any action of theirs, good or bad. If they had been dissatisfied with British rule, the rulers could not have so long maintained their policy in this country ; nor could they have escaped from the dangerous situation in which they were placed by the Sepoy Mutiny if the majority of the Indians had been discontented with their rule. That the sepoys could not become so dangerous as they otherwise would have been was simply because the majority of the Indian subjects of the Crown were attached to the British rule and were not dissatisfied with it. The English saw all this, and issued a Proclamation immediately after the Mutiny to re-assure the people with a view of attaching them still more strongly to the British rule, and removing any dissatisfaction they may have conceived towards it. The Sepoy Mutiny convinced the English more strongly than they had been before that interference with the customs and observances of the people of India meant interference with their religion, and this led the rulers, after the fire of the Mutiny had been quenched, to give the Indians full assurance to the effect that the authorities would do their utmost to protect the religion and customs of the people. The Queen herself proclaimed in her native tongue that she would not interfere with the religion or the customs of any of her subjects, weak or strong, or allow any of her officials so to interfere. This inviolable Proclamation made Her Majesty the more respected by her subjects. And the Governor-General who proclaimed this promise on the part of Her Majesty to her Indian subjects lives for ever in their memory.

The English are fully aware of the fact that the life of the Indians consists in the observance of religion and custom, and they therefore take particular



care not to interfere with either. But to err is human, and the English rulers too, from time to time, interfere with religion and custom through misconception and misunderstanding. They are not certainly well-wishers of the Government who do not warn it when it commits such mistakes. They that encourage Government to take such wrong steps are very wicked men indeed. Even well-meaning Englishmen in England often fall into similar errors through their ignorance of the moral and social customs of the people of India. Her Majesty herself is not above human frailties, and it is very wrong indeed on the part of her Ministers to encourage her in her errors.

The people of India are not like the people of England. They are religious monomaniacs, so to say; and the only thing they long for in this world is peace. In religious matters, Indians should therefore be left entirely to themselves, or the situation will become dangerous. Left completely free in the observance of their customs and religions, the people of India will pass their days quietly on this earth. But their religion or their customs injured or interfered with, and they become fearfully excited, for even the deer ventures to oppose the lion, and the lamb loses its meekness and the tortoise its patience.

A seed sown does not germinate at once, and the germ of a disease takes a long time to form itself. But where there is caution there is no danger. The King who does not think of the future is sure to be in danger some time or other.

The Age of Consent Bill.

39. The same paper has the following :—

Sir Andrew Scoble seems to think that the following quotation from Madhava Parasara, which he has hit upon, is a strong argument in support of the Bill, and one which will completely refute the argument of the pundits throughout India against the Bill. The passage runs as follows :—

“The following cases are exceptions to the general rule, that a wife incurs sin for failing to cohabit with her husband during her menses.

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If the word “অপূর্ণিতা” is taken to mean a girl who has not yet attained her youth, the quotation does in no way support the Bill, for nobody wants to perform the *garbhadhan* of such a girl. Is Sir Andrew such a thoughtless man that he will, by allowing himself to be led by a self-seeking Sastri, prove himself so stupid in his conduct?

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The Age of Consent Bill.

The interests of Anglo-Indians are closely connected with the Factory Bill, and so its passing has been so much delayed. Reports on the working of the Indian factories were called for, inquiries were made, and a Commission was appointed, and all with a view of pleasing the Anglo-Indians. But consider the haste with which the Scoble Bill is being passed. Surely its passing would not have been so hastened if the interests of Anglo-Indians had been in any way connected with it.

The chief object of the Scoble Bill is to satisfy the English public and thereby to strengthen the Tory Ministry. If it at all aims at the reformation of Indian society, the aim is certainly a secondary one. If the majority of the English people say to-day :—“We do not approve of this reformation of Indian society,” the Bill will be shelved tomorrow, and all that tall talk about philanthropy and disinterestedness which the Viceroy and his Law Member are indulging in will end. Sir Andrew Scoble has got England’s support, and that is why he has taken up such a defiant attitude and is giving no heed to the opposition of the Indians. But though not saying so openly, they are saying in their hearts, “We are not afraid of the Indian opposition. We would have had to act with caution if there had been any chance of an agitation being made on the subject in England. But though disapproved by a few Anglo-Indians, the Scoble Bill has the support of the majority of the English people.” It is this English

BANGAVASI,  
March 14th, 1891

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR  
CHANDRIKA,  
March 15th, 1891.



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Bill:—

The interests of Anglo-Indians are closely connected with the Factory Bill, and so its passing has been so much delayed. Reports on the working of the Indian factories were called for, inquiries were made, and a Commission was appointed, and all with a view of pleasing the Anglo-Indians. But consider the haste with which the Scoble Bill is being passed. Surely its passing would not have been so hastened if the interests of Anglo-Indians had been in any way connected with it.

The chief object of the Scoble Bill is to satisfy the English public and thereby to strengthen the Tory Ministry. If it at all aims at the reformation of Indian society, the aim is certainly a secondary one. If the majority of the English people say to-day:—“We do not approve of this reformation of Indian society,” the Bill will be shelved tomorrow, and all that tall talk about philanthropy and disinterestedness which the Viceroy and his Law Member are indulging in will end. Sir Andrew Scoble has got England’s support, and that is why he has taken up such a defiant attitude and is giving no heed to the opposition of the Indians. But though not saying so openly, they are saying in their hearts, “We are not afraid of the Indian opposition. We would have had to act with caution if there had been any chance of an agitation being made on the subject in England. But though disapproved by a few Anglo-Indians, the Scoble Bill has the support of the majority of the English people.” It is this English

BANGAVARI,  
March 14th, 1891

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR  
CHANDRIKA,  
March 15th, 1891.



support that has made the Viceroy and his Councillors so bold, and this boldness is the cause of our disappointment. English boldness will pass all bounds if they can disregard the protest which is being made against the Age of Consent Bill. There will always be philanthropists in England, and those philanthropists will gradually try to introduce all the customs of their society into this country, and the Ministry for the time being in England will be always anxious to humour them. And as there will be no lack of traitors in this country, Hindu and Mussulman society will be one day necessarily jeopardised. So India will gradually become like England, on the bad side.

The English are now very powerful in India. Their power is gradually increasing, and they do not now care much for the people of the country, because they have ceased to fear them. Over and above this, they have been able to create disunion in the country, and increase the number of those who are traitors to this country. The spread of English education has been attended with these effects. Internal disunion is also on the increase. The path of Government in the matter of this Scoble Bill would not have been so free from difficulty if the traitors had not helped it.

The opinions of all the Provincial Governments, of the High Courts, and of the officials of Government on the Ilbert Bill were taken and published in the official Gazette for fear of the Anglo-Indians. But the opinions which have been received on the Scoble Bill have not been published in the Gazette, because Government does not fear the Hindus and Mahomedans. It is rumoured that three of the Provincial Governments and the Allahabad High Court have opposed the Bill, and not even the Calcutta High Court has given the Bill an unqualified support. The Government of the North-Western Provinces too is not satisfied with the Scoble Bill.

His Excellency Lord Lansdowne has said that he will pass the Factory and the Scoble Bills on Thursday next (the 18th instant). Thursday is not a Council day, but special arrangements for the festivity will be made. Yes, it will really be a festivity. It will be festivity for the Viceroy and his Law Minister—all triumph and victory to them! It is the people only who will be ruined. Sir Romesh Chunder is ill, and the Bill will be passed even if Sir Romesh be absent from the Council. His Excellency the Viceroy will not be able to sleep until the *garbhadhan* law is passed. He does not now grant interviews to anybody. He becomes impatient if anybody says anything against the Bill. The patience and calmness befitting his office have left him. O cursed destiny, when you have made so cool a statesman as Lord Lansdowne so impatient, there is nothing that you cannot do. It is no wonder therefore that you have made the Law Member mad. The writer has heard that the Scoble Bill will be passed on Thursday even in the absence of Sir Romesh; for if it is not passed on that day, English prestige will disappear for ever, and the Indian Empire will slip out of the hands of the English. The very existence of the Empire depends on the Scoble Bill. Lord Lansdowne will be a second Canning.

DACCA PRAKASH,  
March. 15th, 1891.

The Age of Consent Bill.

41. The *Dacca Prakash*, of the 15th March, has the following in connection with the Age of Consent

Bill:—

The writer cannot believe that Government will disregard all opposition against the Bill and maintain its *zid* by passing it into law. What fate has written for the people will surely come to pass. The writer is glad to find a ray of light in the midst of the darkness of sorrow which surrounds him. The agitation against the Bill has removed the erroneous impression under which he was labouring that Hindu society was dead. Yes, Hindu society is dying, but is not yet dead. The people of the country had hitherto thought that Government might oppress them by levying fresh taxes every day, and high English officials might oppress them by committing various acts of injustice, but the Queen's Proclamation would always protect them as ever-inuring coat of mail protects the body. But this blind belief of theirs is now destroyed. They now know that from this time forward they will have not only to make themselves ready to acquire new political rights and protect rights already received, but also to gird up their loins in order to protect their religion from the attacks of Government. The Ilbert Bill gave birth to the Anglo-Indian and Eurasian Defence Association, and the Scoble Bill is bringing into existence the more powerful Dharma Mandali.



Raja Peary Mohan Mukherji and Raja Sasisikheresvara Roy contemplate establishing a Hindu Dharma Mandali with the object of protecting Hindu society and Hindu religion from external attacks and giving increased publicity to the Hindu Sastras and securing a wider observance of Hindu manners and customs. It is superfluous to say that every Hindu ought to join the Mandali. The Maharajah of Durbhanga also feels the necessity of an association like this. Government's oppression and injustice have shattered the heart of Hindu society, and the Hindu Dharma Mandali has made its appearance at a very opportune moment.

42. The *Som Prakash*, of the 16th March, refers to the puja at Kalighat in connection with the Age of Consent Bill, and observes as follows:—

SOM PRAKASH,  
March 16th, 1891.

The scene at Kalighat was one the like of which was never before seen during the English administration of this country. Not only Saktas, but even Vaishnavas joined in the puja, forgetting for the time their sectarian prejudices. The hymns which were sung on the occasion were expressive of the loyalty of the people to the British Government. The immense gathering was a spontaneous one and cannot possibly be said to have been the work of agitators and wire-pullers.

43. The same paper says that the Select Committee's report on the Age of Consent Bill has taken it by surprise. The Committee did not think it worth their while even to refer to the piteous cry of the people for the sake of their religion. It may be the Committee's belief that the proposed law will not interfere with the Hindu religion, but it was nevertheless their duty to place impartially before Government the views of the natives of the country on this subject. The members of the Committee have tarnished their names by not acting in this way.

SOM PRAKASH.

44. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, of the 16th March, has the following:—Whose subjects are we? Who is our sovereign? Boldly shall we give answers to these questions to-day. In name only are we subjects of Her Majesty the Empress Victoria; all subjects of England are of course Her Majesty's subjects. But there is this difference between Her Majesty's Indian subjects and her other subjects, that while the latter are virtually independent, the former are dependent. If we had been directly subject to Her Majesty, even we would have lived in happiness. But we are subjects of Her subjects—the English subjects of Her Majesty are our kings. *A fortiori* these English people who are in India are also our kings. Thus we have not one king, but thirty-five millions of kings.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR,  
CHANDRIKA,  
March 16th, 1891.

Every English subject lords it over the people of India. English trade has checked Indian trade; English industries have paralysed Indian industries; Englishmen are filling all the high posts in India, and ruling the country like Badshahas and Nawabs; Englishmen are framing laws for the Indians; English missionaries are preaching religion to the people of India; Englishmen are working the Indian railways and canals, and English planters are growing tea and indigo in this country. The people of England are thus absolute masters of India.

Matters stood better formerly when the Viceroy wielded greater power than he now does, and India had little to do with the British Parliament. The State then vested in the East India Company, and the Ministers of Her Majesty used to exercise a certain control over the actions of the Company. But now that the Empire has been made *khas*, the English Ministers have become absolute rulers of India. And their first business is to please their constituents. It was for the sake of pleasing their constituents that the English ministers caused the import duties to be abolished, thereby vastly increasing the importation of British goods into India. Take, again, the horrible and ruinous Scoble Bill, which too is going to be passed into law at the instance of the people of England, for the ministers have no alternative but to please their constituents. But this is only the beginning of the end. The Indian Government will have to inflict deeper wounds on the religion and customs of its subjects at the request of the English people.

It is easy to please one king, or all the ministers of one king. The people of Russia are perfectly safe, if they can please their Czar and his ministers. It is the same with the people of Prussia. In fact, the subjects of one Emperor are comparatively less troubled, and the foreign subjects of an Emperor enjoy very great happiness. Had we been as fortunate as the people of England, and



independent like them, then, no doubt, British rule would have suited us well. But we are subjects of Her Majesty only in name: in reality we are servants of the servants of Her Majesty's thirty-five millions of British subjects. The English ministers are servants of the English people, and we are the servants of those ministers.

The Viceroy, who is the British Badshah of India, is now himself the servant of the English ministers. The Lieutenant-Governor is the servant of the Viceroy. The English ministers again are the servants of the Parliament, and the Parliament is the servant of the English people. Thus it will be seen that the Indians are the servants of the servants of the English people. The lot of Indians is pitiable indeed. There is no subject people on the face of this earth whose lot is more pitiable than that of the Indians. This is the whole truth of the matter, and let anybody that wishes it blame us for saying it plainly. There is no gainsaying it; whoever gainsays it is a liar, and an enemy of truth.

India will not be happy unless she is converted into a Colony, and the Anglo-Indians become Indians. She shall know no happiness unless all connection between her and England is severed, and Indian Governors are chosen by the people, and real Parliament, presided over by her people, is given her. But to hope such things for India, inhabited as she is by people of diverse nationalities and religions, is to hope to convert the country into heaven itself.

India will have to remain as she is; and the greater her contact with the British Parliament the more completely will she be brought under the feet of the English people. It will surely be India's lot everlastingly to respect every Englishman and every Anglo-Indian as her master. Republican or democratic forms of Government are not suited to a distant subject people, a monarchical form of Government suits them better. If Her Majesty had been the absolute Sovereign of England, and if English ministers had been subject to her orders, and not to those of the English people, then India's lot would not certainly have been so miserable as it is now. Let the Viceroy become the absolute ruler of the country, and the country will at once begin to fare better. The selfishness, errors, and mistakes of a single ruler can do only ( $\frac{1}{35,000,000}$ th) of the injury that is done to the people of India by the interest of thirty-five millions of English people who are now the real rulers of India. All the misery and oppression to which the Indian people are subject are traceable to the form of Government to which they are subject. The Scoble Bill, for instance, is going to be passed simply in consequence of orders from England; for neither the Viceroy nor his Law Member has introduced this calamitous Bill on his own motion. Probably the Viceroy has already come to see that the Bill will, if passed, do mischief instead of good; and probably His Excellency is moved by the opposition. But he cannot help it; the orders that have come from England must be carried out; and the religion of the people must needs be interfered with.

The people have only one last request to make to Government; and it is this: Let every Indian be imprisoned after his marriage, and detained till the time, as stated in the law, is over. This will save trouble on both sides. It will enable you to stick to your determination to pass the Bill, and it will save the Hindu husband from the sin of not cohabiting with his wife at her first menses. The people therefore with hands joined in supplication pray to you "O affectionate, noble hearted Scoble! why do you not take it upon yourself to propose this amendment on behalf of the people?" Such a prison will be welcome to a people who fear sin, respect religion, love God, and are loyal to their Sovereign. Residence in such a prison would be the nicest escape from a dilemma for people who are placed between its two horns, namely, the law on the one hand, and religious obligation on the other. Such imprisonment will be regarded by a people who look upon their Sovereign as an incarnation of the Deity, as nothing less than living in heaven.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR  
CHANDRIKA,  
March 17th, 1891.

45. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, of the 17th March, says that, in an anonymous pamphlet supporting the Age of Consent Bill, much stress has been laid on a passage found in the Parasara Madhava? The passage is this:—

কতুকালানভিগমনে যো দৌষোভিহিত স্তম্যাপবাদমাহ ব্যাসঃ—

“ব্যাপ্তিতে বন্ধনস্থোবা প্রবাসেস্থ পুরুষে কতুকালমপি নারীগং জগহত্যা প্রচ্যতে। হৃদং বন্ধা মৃত্যুঞ্চ মৃত্যপত্যা মপুস্পিতম্ বন্যাঞ্চ বহুপুত্রাঞ্চ বর্জয়নমুচ্যতে ভয়াৎ”



This means, when translated:—Vyasa thus mentions the exceptions to the injunction which makes cohabitation at *ritu* obligatory: if a man is ill, in jail or living in a distant country, he will not incur the sin of foeticide for not cohabiting with his wife during *ritu*; similarly, he will incur no sin if he omits to cohabit with her on *parva* days. A man also incurs no sin by not cohabiting with an old woman, a barren woman, a woman of bad character, a woman whose children do not live (or die shortly after birth), a woman who is *apushpita* (who does not menstruate), a Kanya (a girl of ten years of age) and a woman who has got a large number of sons. It will be seen from the above that the exceptions relate to those cases where the object of marriage—procreation of sons—has been already accomplished or will never be accomplished. The Hindus marry for the purpose of begetting sons who will give pinda to them after death. This being the case, sexual intercourse becomes unnecessary when there is no chance of any issue being born or where male children have already been born. The writer of the pamphlet has probably taken অগুপ্তিতা (*apushpita*) with কন্যা (*kanya*), in which case the meaning would be a girl who has not yet menstruated. But this is not a correct interpretation. The construction of the passage requires that every one of the seven words বৃদ্ধা, বাক্যা should be taken with the word (woman) স্ত্রী which is to be supplied. The word *cha* after কন্যা stands in the way of its being taken with ‘অগুপ্তিতা’ But even if the writer’s interpretation be correct, it will not give any support to the Bill. For puberty in many cases in this country appears after 10 and before 12. The passage quoted above also occurs in the *Nirnaya Sindhu*. The word অগুপ্তিতা occurring in the passage means a woman who does not menstruate, and such women are not rare. And as such women do not manifest any external signs of *ritu*, a man incurs no sin by not cohabiting with them, for it can never be ascertained whether intercourse with them will be followed by conception and birth of children. It should also be noted here that the passage in question does not occur in the authentic manuscripts of Parasara, though it occurs in Pandit Chandrakanta Tarkalankar’s edition of the work.

#### VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

46. The *Setare Hind*, of the 5th March, says that the casualties on the tramway lines in Calcutta have become very frequent owing to the carelessness of the drivers and conductors. Such casualties would surely be fewer if the offenders were more severely punished than they now are.

SETARE HIND,  
March 5th, 1891.

47. *Al Punch*, of the 9th March, says that, although a great deal of obscenity in speech and action is indulged in by the Hindus every year during the *Holi* festival, still the authorities take no steps to check the practice. The police does not move in the matter because the inferior police officers are themselves offenders in this respect; and the prohibitive cost of law suits prevents those who are wronged from seeking redress in the law courts.

AL PUNCH,  
March 9th, 1891.

48. A correspondent of the *Burdwan Sanjivani*, of the 10th March, doubts whether, in spite of Government’s efforts to secure correctness, the Census work has been accurately done in the district of Burdwan. The enumerator of block No. 1 in the village of Ronda, within the Cutwa circle, learnt on the 27th February that gurwans, who on the night of the Census stayed at a serai to the east of Onda, a village within the Culna circle, had not been enumerated there and took down their names and whereabouts. No one can say that omissions of this nature did not occur in other places also.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,  
March 10th, 1891.

49. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 12th March, says that one Census enumerator has entered “sucking” as the occupation of a child, and another having called at a

BENGAL EXCHANGE  
GAZETTE,  
March 12th, 1891.



temple of the god Dharma Thakur and found no one there, made the following entries in the schedule :—

Name	...	...	...	Dharmaraj.
Caste	...	...	...	Thakur.
Religion	...	...	...	Hindu.
Sub-division of religion	...	...	...	Sakta.
Age	...	...	...	Very old.
Occupation	...	...	...	Pensioner.
Married or not	...	...	...	Not.
Literate or illiterate	...	...	...	Illiterate.

And in a note the enumerator gave this reason for calling the god a "Sakta" under the head of sub-division of religion, namely, that the Thakur was in the habit of eating the flesh of goats.

SUDHAKAR,  
March 13th 1891.

Mahomedan decline.

50. The *Sudhakar*, of the 13th March, has the following :—

The fire of faith kindled in the Arabian oasis at the beginning of the thirteenth century sent a spark across the Arabian seas to the Golden Peninsula, where it kept burning till recently. The resplendent light of that fire cheered the hearts of the Indian Mussulmans, who proclaimed the glory of the Islam religion with cries of "Alla ho Akhbar." But Providence at last sent the English to that country in order to put out that light for ever. India's fate was sealed that very day on which Captain Lancaster directed his ship south-eastward to India for the ostensible purpose of trading with that country. The *Takta Taus* (the peacock throne of Shahjehan) in Dehli shook on that day. The English in the guise of merchants gradually assumed a fierce look, and the sun of the Bengal Mussulman's glory went down for ever on the field of Plassey; and along with it the blazing fire of faith was completely stamped out. How agonising it is to recall that dark day! Surely nothing can be more painful than the recollection of that fatal day. What a disheartening and desolate spectacle do the Mahomedans and their religion present compared with what they formerly were! The Islamites have really fallen on evil days. Plunged in the lowest depth of degradation, they have become the objects of the world's contempt and ridicule, and they are constantly slandered and trampled upon by others. And all this they bear without a word of complaint. They do not now scruple to adopt even the basest means to earn a livelihood. And sad to say the people, who a century ago lived only to serve the Mahomedans in the meanest capacities, now hate them as demons, and purify themselves with Ganges water on coming in contact even with their shadow. Can history present a parallel to such national degradation?

SULABH SAMACHAR,  
March 14th, 1891.

51. The *Sulabh Samachar*, of the 14th March, says that the fact of the enumerators in the last census not having visited several houses, and not having taken back the schedules from several others, shows that the enumeration work has not been correctly done this time.

SULABH SAMACHAR.

52. Referring to the insult lately offered by some European soldiers to a native lady passenger at the Dum-Dum station of the Eastern Bengal State Railway, the same paper says that these European soldiers are oppressing the people in various ways, and without regard to the rank and social position of the persons whom they oppress. This is quite natural; for they have come to see that the authorities do not punish them for any offence, however grave. Moreover, they are men of very low origin, and being quite ignorant of the rules of civility, are governed solely by their grosser passions. It is very probable that discipline among the army has become lax, or the soldiers would not venture to commit excesses calculated to arouse anger even in the dead.

#### ASSAM PAPERS.

PARIDARSHAK,  
March 9th, 1891.

Mr. Wilson, Director of Public Instruction in Assam.

53. The *Paridarshak*, of the 9th March, has the following :—

(1) Mr. Wilson, the head of the Education Department in Assam, is not only indifferent to high education in that province, but is a persistent enemy of it. He thinks that the education which is imparted in the pathsalas is enough



for the people of this province, though the people have of recent years shown a great longing for English education. It was with great difficulty and after the matter had been more than once represented to the Chief Commissioner that Mr. Wilson could be brought to sanction the establishment of a school at Maulavi Bazar. Mr. Wilson has also, without consultation with the Local Board, reduced the grant of the Kadimgunge school by ten rupees. The Chief Commissioner himself indirectly reflected on this action of Mr. Wilson's when he wrote in the last Administration Report that "a general, though on the whole inconsiderable, loss of pupils took place under the heads of high and middle schools."

(2) Mr. Wilson treats the recommendations of the Education Commission with contempt, and never even mentions them in his reports. Two or three years ago the Chief Commissioner, at the instance of the Government of India, asked Mr. Wilson to write a separate chapter in his report on those recommendations, but, strange to say, Mr. Wilson has not yet carried out that order of the Chief Commissioner. The recommendations of the Education Commission had for their principal object the encouragement of private enterprise in educational work. It is true that the people of Assam, poor and ill-educated as they are, have not yet displayed that enterprise in educational work which is observable in other provinces. Still it cannot be denied that Assam can do a great deal in this way with proper encouragement from Government. But Mr. Wilson is dead against private enterprise in education. Mr. Wilson has maintained a Government school in the Khasia and Jaintia Hills simply for the purpose of competing with the missionary school which is kept at that place by the Revd. Mr. Jones. Mr. Wilson's school is a miserable institution, but he will not abolish it.

(3) Mr. Wilson's work of inspection does no good. Not being a literary man, he never takes notice of literary subjects during his inspection of a school. The only subject in which he examines boys is mathematics, in one branch of which, namely, arithmetic, he is fairly proficient. He has been seen to carefully cultivate mental arithmetic, the decimals, the practice, and the rule-of-three. Mental arithmetic is his favourite, so much so that he has introduced it even in schools where it is not needed. It is said that he has invented a method of solving questions on the rule-of-three, which excites every mathematician's laughter.

(4) Mr. Wilson is guided solely by favouritism in the award of examinations. Even his clerks are appointed examiners, while efficient men in the Education Service are denied that privilege. The questions in Bengali and Assamese are generally very badly framed.

(5) The Assam grant-in-aid rules have been framed much after the manner of the Bengal rules. But they are not strictly adhered to in practice. The inter-school rules made by Mr. Wilson were so incomplete that the late Chief Commissioner, Mr. FitzPatrick, had to revise them himself. The existing rules were framed by the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, who knew Mr. Wilson to be a worthless man, and used, therefore, personally to deal with all important educational questions. Is that the reason why Mr. Wilson frowns at the very mention of Mr. FitzPatrick's name?

(6) In the selection of text-books, Mr. Wilson is guided partly by the recommendations of Deputy Inspectors and partly by the requests of authors. He has lately introduced into the schools certain readers compiled by Mr. Nesfield, Inspector of Schools, Oudh, and it is also said that he has prohibited the teachers in Assam from compiling keys to those readers, as Mr. Nesfield himself has prepared keys to his readers. Has Mr. Wilson any authority to issue a prohibitory order of this kind? Again, text-books not procurable in India are sometimes introduced at the request of authors.

(7) Mr. Wilson depends entirely on his subordinates for the preparation of his budget and report.

(8) Mr. Wilson seems to be of opinion that University graduates cannot make good teachers. He wants teachers to be as submissive to him as his own clerks are. He has often been known to overlook the claims of B. As and M. As, and to appoint his own clerks as teachers.

(9) As for his control over his subordinate officers, all that need be said is that he has certain favourites who, in his opinion, can commit no fault, whilst there are subordinates who, in his opinion, can never be right.



It will thus appear that under Mr. Wilson public education in Assam has greatly deteriorated.

PARIDARSHAK,  
March 9th, 1891.

54. The same paper publishes the following letter and notification received by it from the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal:—

BENGAL SECRETARIAT,  
*The 20th January 1891.*

The Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal presents his compliments to the Editor of the *Paridarshak*, and sends for his information the paper noted below, which may be of interest to the public:—Notification prohibiting appearance in England of petitioners who have been unsuccessful litigants in the Indian Courts.

SRIHATTA MIHIR,  
March 9th, 1891.

55. The *Srihatta Mihir*, of the 9th March, says that Babu Kunja Kishore De, a teacher of the Akhalia school, received on the 9th January last an order from the District Superintendent of Police, Sylhet, appointing him a Census Inspector. The order was passed on the 6th January, and was received by Kunja Babu three days after. Kunja Babu then wanted to go on a pilgrimage, and accordingly applied to the District Superintendent on the day following his receipt of the order to be relieved of his duties in connection with the Census. The Saheb ordered Baikantha Babu to put up this application before him on the 11th January, and rejected it on the 14th January with the remark "This is all nonsense; he must postpone his pilgrimage." After that Kunja Babu wrote a letter to the District Superintendent asking him to retract his remarks. In reply, the District Superintendent wrote as follows:—

*Copy of the District Superintendent's order on letter of Kunja Kishore Babu, Census Inspector, dated 15th February 1891.*

I do not see what there is to retract in the order passed by me. Besides, retraction would not be of any use now, for the time for making pilgrimage has passed I suppose; but if the Babu's feelings have been wounded, I am very sorry. But Babu Kunja Kishore Dey should have applied to be relieved of his duties as Census Inspector earlier. He applied too soon before the date of the actual census taking, and he could not be allowed then to give up his work and go away.

D. W. RITCHIE—17-2-91.

Copy forwarded to Babu Kunja Kishore Dey, Census Inspector, for information.

The Census was taken on the 26th February, and Kunja Babu applied to be relieved of his duties on the 10th January, and yet the District Superintendent says that "he applied too soon before the date of the actual Census taking." So much for the truthfulness of the Saheb. As for his remark 'This is all nonsense; he must postpone his pilgrimage,' a Saheb has the right to use such language towards a Bengali, and Kunja Babu has no reason to be sorry for it.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,  
*Bengali Translator.*

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,  
*The 21st March 1891.*